

Improvement of Discharge Education for Pediatric Outpatient Surgical Patients

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Background Information

- ❖ Postoperative education is an essential component of nursing care aimed at empowering patients and families to understand their condition, surgery and recovery^{1,2,3}.
- ❖ Results of individual and meta-analytic studies support the importance of providing clear and specific post-operative education and its effectiveness in improving outcomes and reducing costs associated with post-operative complications and readmissions^{1,2}.
- ❖ Written discharge instructions provide a tangible resource that patients and families can use to improve comprehension and execution of post-operative care^{1,2,3}
- ❖ Our hospital had a change in vendor provided discharge instructions. During a transition from physician hand-written instructions to standardized printed instructions gaps were noticed from what was previously available and the new vendor discharge instructions. Verbal instructions were frequently given to patients/families by physicians and nurses to fill this gap.
- ❖ As part of a nurse-led project, the perioperative services team at a free-standing children's hospital collaborated to evaluate and enhance patient discharge education through the standardization of handouts and written discharge instructions.

Objective of Project

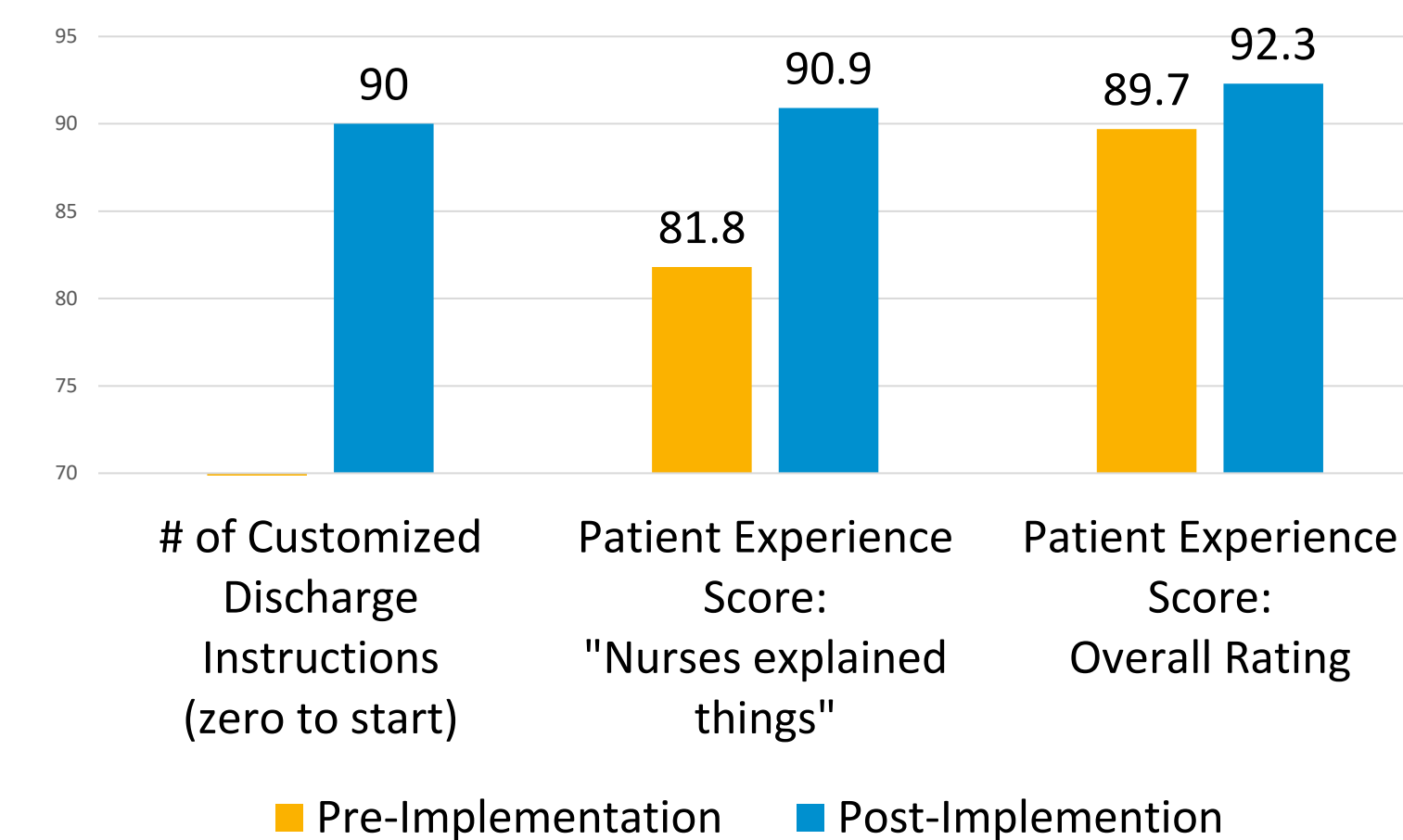
The goal of this project was to enhance patient/family satisfaction and facilitate safe transition home postoperatively by improving written discharge instructions through customization and standardization.

Process of Implementation

- ❖ Using the plan, do, study, act problem-solving model, the PACU Clinical Practice Council (CPC) collaborated with procedural physicians to develop comprehensive education for commonly performed procedures.
- ❖ First, an assessment of existing vendor provided discharge instructions and gap analysis were completed.
- ❖ Next, a review of literature to identify best practices in patient/family education was compiled^{1,2,3}.
- ❖ Recognizing the importance of health literacy, the council partnered with the organizational Patient and Family Education committee to assure readability and comprehension.
- ❖ Lastly the new discharge instructions were uploaded to the existing discharge software.
- ❖ Nurses were educated on new education materials as they became available.

Statement of Successful Practice

- ❖ Outcomes of these efforts include the creation of 90 custom written discharge instructions.
- ❖ Patient/family handouts are customized to specific physician and procedural needs.
- ❖ As a result, patients and families are now given appropriate, specific and understandable instructions for care after procedures, providing a safe transition to home.
- ❖ Collaboration with physicians is ongoing to create new or update instructions as gaps are identified.
- ❖ Improved patient experience scores for the following questions:
 - ❖ Did nurses explain things in a way you could understand?
 - ❖ Overall rating of facility



Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing

The stress of a child having a procedure combined with the need to comfort a fussy child post-operatively makes it challenging for families to understand and execute discharge instructions. The capacity to retain vital discharge instructions, when provided in an easy-to-understand format improves patient and family comprehension and compliance, improving outcomes and patient/family satisfaction.



References

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3. Weiss, M. E., Sawin, K. J., Gralton, K., Johnson, N., Klingbeil, F, Lerret, S., Schiffman, R. (2017). Discharge teaching, readiness for discharge, and post-discharge outcomes in parents of hospitalized children. *Journal of Pediatric Nursing*, 34, 58-64.